

4/04/16
Week 15: Spring Mission Feeding
Mark Rutland

Betty: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm so glad you could join us today. I'm Betty and this is James.

James: Yeah, I'm smiling because Mark Rutland is with us and we've had a 30 year journey together. The first time you preached for me, you had just torn your ACL? Is that right? So you came in to preach and one of the greatest sermons I've ever heard and I didn't know you. I mean, you waddled up there like you could barely get there –

Mark: I was on crutches!

James: Tell them what you did when you left and then went out and got into the car.

Mark: They got me down off of the platform, took me out to a car, and I passed out. I don't remember one other thing from there to the hospital.

James: He had literally been playing some pickup basketball and tore his ACL, which is just unbearable, and he came on and preached and then the guy preached on our Bible conference several times, he's preached at our church, Gateway, a lot.

But the thing is – think about this! We've had some of the most famous preachers in the world, and I mean, the ones everybody knows their names. And this guy comes in and preaches at our Bible conference and it's the greatest sermon all of our friends said they ever heard. It was called Power Not Power.

And I say to all of you who are watching on television, you right up here, it will be older television, it won't be high def, it won't just pop. But I want to tell you, my friends have taken that Power Not Power message, called all their neighbors in, sat down in their living rooms and God show up. And this has been going on for years. Power Not Power. Now, my staff is going to be very upset. We had to go in and get these old tapes and start reproducing. You won't be sorry.

Mark, I love you. And I know that when you went to ORU it was a real surprise that you were just called as a pastor and an itinerant speaker, and suddenly you not only were called to Oral Roberts University as president but they took you to California to meet Oral and to – Really,

think the shock of everyone, Oral said, and they never told you this, “You’re the one I felt God wanted to follow with.” What effect did that have just to hear that?

Mark: Oh, it was huge. It was wonderfully liberating. I had been ten years the president at Southeastern University in Florida and then moved to ORU. I wasn't sure what that transition would be like, there had been a lot of troubles there. It was a troubled campus, as you know.

When the chairman of the board and I flew to California and met with Oral, that’s the moment when the board had not told me in the hiring process and Oral said, “You are my personal choice for this presidency.” It was wonderfully liberating.

James: Well, you walked them through a very important time, and now then – and really thanks to the Green family, what a blessing they’ve been and then the president there now, a good friend, Wilson is just great. And our son graduated there, Randy, and you will probably be talking to him if you haven't already. I know he will want to talk to you.

Alright, I want you to talk about this book and let me just say, 21 seconds to change your world, your world. And I have an idea that when that world changes it will impact the world because that really is why we’ve been left here. But how in the world can 21 seconds change someone’s world and what you actually tell us is you’re referring to a passage of scripture that most people, if there’s one that is let’s say recited publicly or in groups and everyone would know almost as well as let’s say how popular John 3:16 is. It’s the Lord’s Prayer.

And then you took the most popular ministry Psalm for comfort in the entire Bible perhaps, the 23 Psalm. Tell us what you’re implying right here. I want to know.

Mark: It takes about 21 seconds to pray the Lord’s Prayer. I’ve prayed it over the last 12 years or so, I’ve prayed the Lord’s Prayer multiple times a day, five, ten, twenty, thirty, fifty. I’ve prayed it thousands of times in the last ten or twelve years and combined it with the 23rd Psalm. I found that the Lord’s Prayer alone, you’re praying about 21 seconds if you pray at a normal pace.

I’ve got a friend who’s from New Jersey and she said, “I can pray it in 19 seconds.”

I said, “Well, it’s not a race!”

[Laughter]

I’ve got another friend from south Alabama, he said, “It takes me 30 seconds.” But it’s about 21 seconds and in that 21 seconds, basically, the believer prays the comprehensive need of prayer. Everything is touched on: worship, providence, protection – everything. Inner healing, it’s all in 21 seconds. The brilliant economy of language that Jesus uses in that prayer is absolutely amazing. If it was edited by the top editors in the world for a hundred years, they couldn't improve on that prayer.

James: Okay, you break it down phrase by phrase, the significance of that, Mark. Because it's not just the 21 seconds that you pass, but you actually point out the impact, the potential impact, perhaps the intended impact if we really are open to the Lord and to the Holy Spirit, to illuminate our minds and give us understanding. You point out the power in those phrases extensively and inspirationally. Can you kind of – can you dwell with that and --

Mark: I began this lengthy journey with the Lord's Prayer in a difficult time in my own life and it became a handle, something I could grip. I think there are people who come to the place where they literally feel like they can't pray, like a Claudius and Hamlet. He said, "My words fly up to heaven but my thoughts stay here below." And that we just feel we can't pray. Why not pray the one prayer that Jesus taught us in 21 seconds? Worship the fatherhood of God, the providence of God, the forgiveness of God, the kingdom of God, the will of God... everything that we could ever think of to pray about in 21 seconds. You can pray the Lord's Prayer before the shot clock runs out at a basketball game and I've prayed it many, many times. Give us this day our daily three point.

[Laughter]

James: Alright, tell us what – there's something that jumps out at me because I guess I have felt that so many in the church community, so many believers, don't seem to understand the importance of his will being done, but preceded by his kingdom coming, which Jesus made pretty clear is within us. It's not like something you're waiting. There is a kingdom to come, but the kingdom now that is here, I seem to hear there that when he's praying that and his will be done on earth as in heaven that there's something significant related to kingdom and his will now. Am I getting that right?

Mark: No, you're right on the target. For those of us who learned the Lord's Prayer in more liturgical settings, as I did in the Methodist church. We learned in the King James Version the preposition that's used there is 'in,' "thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

Most modern translations, for some reason, changed the preposition to 'on.' I'm not running for Congress on it. So it's a mistake to build a theological structure on a preposition. But both ways are meaningful. "-- thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth" has a sort of planetary feel. Maranatha, come Lord Jesus. Thy kingdom be established on the earth, in governments, in nations. God knows we need to pray that. Now, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, if it would just be done in Washington I would be grateful. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth.

But what if you pray it the other way? Thy kingdom come, they will be done in earth – It dawned on me, what does that mean? That can't be planetary because it's – the Lord's Prayer is not the journey to the center of the earth. In earth, what does that mean? What are we made of? Dust thou art and to dust thou returnest. We're made of earth! Isn't that what the Bible says? Know you not we have this kingdom or this glory in earthen vessels? The kingdom of God is within you.

So in that sense I think we're praying thy kingdom come, thy will be done in this earth, in my world, in me. That's the transforming nature of the prayer, that thy kingdom come, there is no way to separate the kingship. Kingdom simply means kingship. There's no way to separate the kingship of God and the will of God. I cannot be under his kingship and not do his will. I can't find his will and not be under his kingship. Thy kingdom come, they will be done in the earth, which is me. That's the ultimate transforming prayer of surrender.

Betty: The personal application, really, you have to deal with that within your own self. I mean, you can't just wide spread, just like you said, not the whole earth, but it's talking about what happens inside of us?

Mark: That's right! And it's both, isn't it? The prayer is plural. Our father which art in heaven, give us this day. Forgive us our sins. Those are – Lead us not into temptation. The prayer is plural. And you want to pray it that way, certainly. It is a body of Christ prayer. It's the most unifying prayer across denominational, cultural, geographical, lines, protestant, catholic. Catholics call it the Our Father, which makes sense actually sense it starts with "Our father." But I think it's the most unanimously prayed prayer in all of Christianity.

But when you make it personal, as you're saying, Betty, that's when it really finds its healing and delivering power. Thy kingdom come, they will be done in the earth, which is me! Forgive me of my trespasses as I forgive those. But that requires a translation in the prayer.

Betty: And that might be the hardest one to do because you're asking then, God search me, know me.

Mark: Absolutely.

James: And you're asking for the grace to forgive others. And that was so huge because we really – Christine Caine is teaching right now on being trapped by the past. You know, you've got to get past the past, get freed from it and if we don't forgive he even comes back following that prayer – it's the only part he came right back to, but if you don't forgive others then you've actually put up a block to your own relationship with God, and the freedom that forgiveness offers you.

Mark: It's the only part of the prayer upon which Jesus added narrative editorial after he teaches the prayer, and then he says, "--for if you will not forgive."

Do you know most people don't know this though, even people who read the Bible a lot, there's one other place where Jesus says the same thing, where he says, "for if you will not forgive, your father in heaven cannot forgive you."

Do you know where it is? It's following the place where he says, "If you have faith you can say to this mountain be thou removed and cast into the sea for if you will forgive..." In other words, he ties God's kingdom's authority over the kingdom of this world to the issue of

forgiveness. It's the only two places where Jesus says, "For if you will forgive, God will forgive you."

James: Mark, I can never choose not to forgive and I've had people that don't like me. The time you and I met, I was being spoken against. You said you took the place of a preacher who was criticized for coming to my conference so he just chose not to come, didn't show up. And you were the crippled replacement that we brought in, to hobble in and take his place.

[Laughter]

But the point is, I had so many people saying unkind things to me who didn't understand that I was catching the wind of the spirit and I was yielded wine skin, ready to be stretched by the will and the work, and the word, and the power of God. They didn't understand. I can do nothing but love them and it's been amazing because that love never failed. We're such good friends. People who didn't even like me, they suddenly decide we're family. It's amazing what forgiveness does and the horror of unforgiveness.

Mark: Forgiveness is the – It doesn't do anything for the person I forgive. Forgiveness is what heals me. Over the years I've used the Lord's Prayer and the 23rd Psalm in counseling and as an instrument of healing.

I'm going to tell you about a man eight years ago who's an elderly man and he had horrible nightmares since 1945. He was a demolition expert with the marines in the South Pacific in World War 2. He blew up a machine gun nest, not able to see it. He blew it up and the enemy had tied civilians across the front of the nest as a human shield. And he said when he blew that up, he blew those people to pieces and a child's arm hit him in the face. He said since 1945 -- he said, "I wake up screaming." He said my wife has nearly lost her mind. I've tried alcohol, I've tried prescription drugs...

We sat for about two hours just discussing the Lord's Prayer, discussing forgiveness, forgiving those enemy soldiers, even forgiving those civilians. And finally I said, "Forgive God!"

He said, "That's blasphemy!"

I said, "No, it's only blasphemy if you think God needs your forgiveness. You forgive God because you need to get rid of your bitterness toward God."

We prayed though it. We worked on it. We worked on it. Listen, James, not in a year, not six months, not three months, not three days. The next morning he called me and he said the first peaceful night sleep I've had since 1945. That's the healing power of forgiveness.

James: That's what I want for all of you who may be stuck somewhere.

Father, you just by the power of your spirit and your love right now, move people to experience what Mark just talked about and to be able to forgive however awful it seems to have been. Please, God. In Jesus' name.

My father raped my mother. My father left me. My father came back when I was a teenager. He tried to kill my mother. He would have except he thought he had when she passed out. He told me he would kill me. In self defense I easily could have killed him. He came to our home later, we couldn't let him in the house. I'm driving home from college and I saw a man lying in the gutter. I got out of my car and went over and turned him over. It was my father. I took him to our little ten by fifty trailer house, mobile home, and I couldn't let him go in the house with Betty and our daughter, couldn't trust him so I put a recliner outside. He slept in it.

I put him in a home and began to get him food. I went in there one day, he had paid somebody to go get him something to drink and he was so drunk he had thrown up all over himself. As a college student, not married many years, a little girl, I knelt down by that bed and pulled that alcoholic filthy man up in my arms and I looked into his old ragged beard and I said, "I don't know you but I love you."

And I want to help you, Mark. If I couldn't have forgiven him I couldn't have loved. One of the great hopes I have is someday I'll get to heaven and I'll see the biggest surprise of our life. Our father said, "Son, look here at what the grace of God did." Now I'm telling you, don't stay stuck!

Mark, you go into not only the Lord's Prayer but you go into the Psalm that was read at our daughter's funeral, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." The great passage. He's with me when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death or any other shadow, of debt or pain or loss or defeat.

Mark, you break down the word of God. You are as gifted as anyone I've ever known to preach and to share. I think, Jentezen, I love you. What a preacher you are. I'm so glad Mark's there with you and your beautiful church. You're a blessing, buddy! I'm not kidding you. You've got God all over you. Praise the Lord for you.

But this book is absolutely fabulous. I hope you will go online. You can order it many ways and many of the sites or you can go to the bookstore to get it.

Mark, you know that we went to the mission fields with you, and you went with us. You do mission work, global servants. We've always prayed for them in a part of encouraging everything you do. You've done the same for us.

Mark: You've been a great blessing.

James: And right now our wonderful viewers are given the opportunity to help us save children's lives. Can you comment on how effective it is when love distributes food to desperate people, and they do it in the name of the greatest love story ever, Jesus. How effective is that?

Mark: It's culture changing. It's continent changing. There's no real other access except for demonstrable acts of love that are meaningful, that are important right where people are. And

what better place than children? They're wounded, they're hurting, lots of those who can't get clean water, they can't get decent food, they have no protection. They're walking victims waiting to be victimized and that's the greatest act of healing love imaginable.

James: And you know why it's really important, the way you said it too, and I've tried to say this over and over: you've never effectively deal with an issue, no matter how serious it is, if there's not a compassion connection. There really needs to be that expression of the love that transforms. That's why taking people's money and just distributing it, even where you see a need, and there's not a direct compassion connection, it's counterproductive. It teaches a false sense of dependence, of entitlement, of expectation, and animosity, without the love connection.

So, what you're about to see is what love does when it's expressed. Would you say thanks to Mark for sharing with us the insight God's given him?

And, Mark, we're going to let every viewer and they watch the program not only because they're blessed by what they hear, they watch this program to be a blessing. That really is what the Lord's Prayer and the 23rd Psalm will teach us, that when we walk that way he does – goodness and mercy follow us but it is also because we are sharing goodness and mercy.

Go with us on a journey. I think you're going to enjoy looking back where Betty and I first saw what in so many ways changed our lives and saved the lives of millions of people and led them to Christ. What closely!

On the mission field

James: There is no grip. The child was not breathing at all. We came in here and began to pray.

They just look like they're in a daze. They're coming here to get food.

God bless you little fella! That's great. The little children like this one here are so much fewer.

>> James, Betty, I can see how your hearts were broken through your many years of traveling throughout Africa. I will say this. It doesn't take long before you see a lot of beautiful work that's been done here through our missionary partners. I want to say we're not finished yet.

These children are dying. They're telling us every six seconds a child dies because of malnutrition.

Announcer: In Angola alone, the grim fact is malnutrition causes nearly half of children's deaths under the age of five. The sight of children struggling to live because they simply lack enough food to eat is the reason *LIFE Outreach* continues to go into the areas of Africa that are

crying out for help. And in place of death, a bowl of food a day can literally become a miracle of life.

>> We must do more. Please! Whatever it takes, we have to reach out to little children like Joseph here. I can see it in his eyes almost. You probably can too where he's just hoping somebody will believe in him enough to reach out and rescue his life. The solution is really a simple bowl of food through mission feeding so these children can live.

End of clip

In the studio

James: You know, that goes back 25 years ago, Betty, when we first went and saw the sorrow. And then I saw us there, and I'm kneeling by a little baby, and there squeegeeing air, they didn't have any kind of oxygen. They were trying to get air into his little body and the baby dies right there and, Betty, you tried to comfort the mother.

And now, I want you to hear this because what love did right there, where that baby was dying in Luanda, what love did, one of the single most famous pictures in history was taken there later, and it was Lady Di, Princess Diana, holding a little baby and looked out at the world and said we need to feed the hungry around the world. And that baby that she's holding was healthy because that baby was saved in that hospital where they were dying fast. I'm talking, we went and saw 12,000 little children buried in just one area just outside of town.

The miracle of love changed what Lady Di said. This is what love does, basically. We need to feed them. That little baby was fed. Fed by people like you who looked in, Betty, and saw those scenes that you and I witnessed with a broken heart.

And you remember, we came back, we did not know if our viewers would help. We knew that most church folks didn't attend prayer meetings, or missions conferences. So we said this is missions and we prayed and the love of God spilled through you. And when we tell you that according to those African governments, that over ten million children's lives were saved and when the missionaries say even more than that trust in Christ as a result of the outreaches, that's what love does. And we're asking you right now to put arms of love around 400,000 little children that are desperate. Many of them have not reached that state where those little children were, so near death. But we're even taking care of the needs there, but we can get them in the feeding lines, like you were seeing.

As a matter of fact, our grandson that had just graduated from Baylor, there he was feeding those children. He said it changed my life forever. You are changing for eternity the lives of the people that you share an opportune to live with.

Would you right now go to lifetoday.org or dial that number that people call for prayer because their hearts are broken. Would you dial the number or go online and say I'm going to be an

answer to prayer. And did you know that some of our friends said, because their hearts were so moved, we will match your gift for 50,000 children, every gift you make they will match it. Thirty, fifty, a hundred... We can feed three, five, or ten children for the next months. But now thirty, fifty, or a hundred jumps to double the three to six, the five to ten, and you're going to be touching the lives of twice as many children.

Would you right now, please Lord, touch hearts? Move hands to respond as you would. In Jesus' name.

Lifetoday.org or dial the number. If you want to make a check, make it to Life. But call us and tell us what you're sending, knowing it's going to be matched by love. Thank you for doing it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: In remote and impoverished areas of Angola, Africa, families are suffering, crops have failed. There is no food. And those hit the hardest are the children.

In response to this crisis, Life Outreach has received a 50,000 children challenge that with your help will feed and minister to 100,000 children over the next few months. With previous food reserves gone and Angola facing a severe food shortage due to crop failure, this challenge could not have come at a better time to help replenish supplies for the feeding programs touching the lives of children across Angola, Mozambique, and Sudan.

The 50,000 children challenge means more children can be saved and your gift will have a double-impact helping to feed twice as many children. Your gift of \$30 to help feed three children will now be doubled to help feed six children! Gifts of \$50 to help feed five children will be doubled to help save ten. And gifts of \$100 for 10 children will be doubled to help feed and care for 20 children.

With a gift of \$1,000 or more you can double your impact to help feed 200 children. And also request the "Majesty" bronze sculpture featuring a beautiful buck in regal stance reflecting God's presence and majesty in all the earth!

Please call the number seen here, write LIFE, or go online today to LifeToday.org and make your life-saving, double-impact gift today!

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I have prayed before we came up here. We joyfully write checks to do what we ask you to do. If you would like to have Mark Rutland's book, *21 Seconds to Change Your World*, and these are the words of God. I tell you what, these are perhaps, other than John 3:16, the most powerful passages and the most known passages in the world. But Mark literally sheds the light on them that is so illuminating and so inspirational.

You help us feed those children, any gift you make, you want the book, we will be so happy to send it to you. Encourage your friends to go online or go to the bookstores and get it.

Mark Rutland is one of our favorite friends and one of the finest preachers I have ever known. Would you say thanks to Mark Rutland?

[Applause]

And I wasn't kidding about that sermon. Power Not Power! Made my staff work! Let them beam you up a copy! I love you and thank you! Thank all of you for being here!